

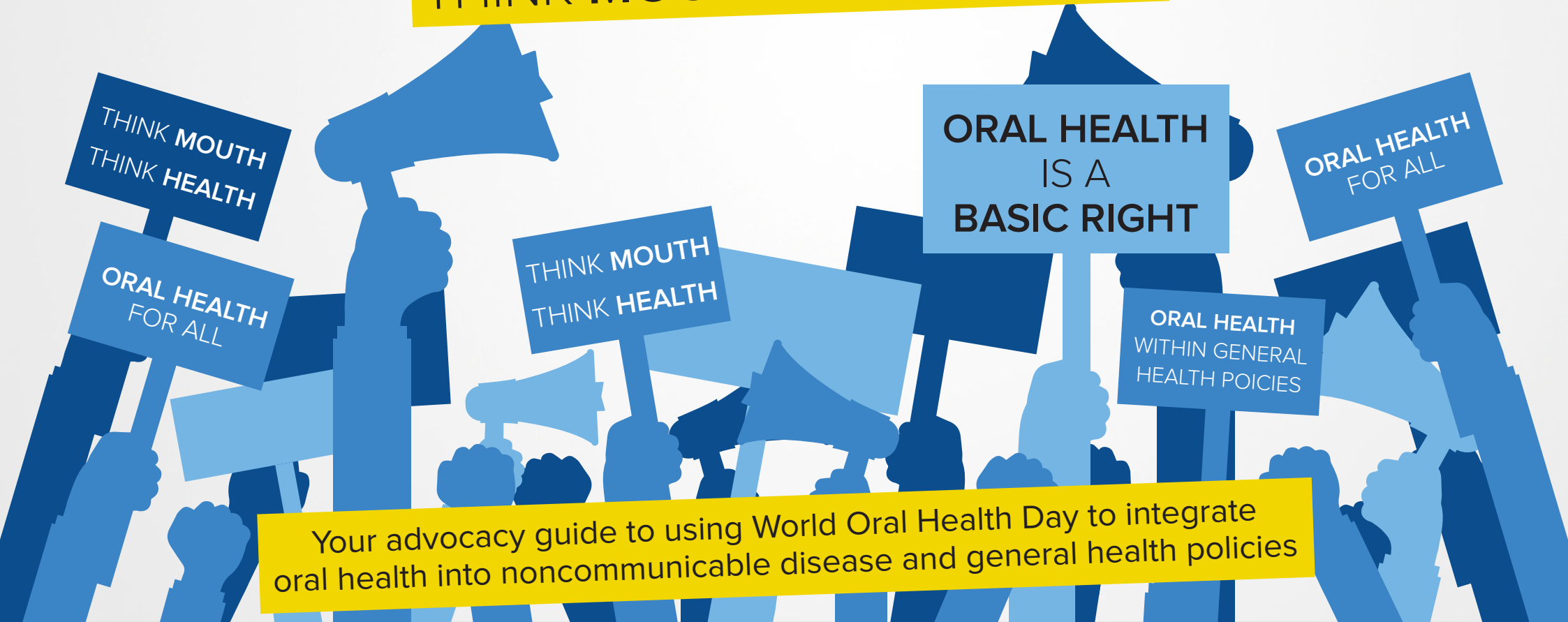
SAY *Ahh*
THINK MOUTH THINK HEALTH

#SayAhh

#WOHD18



GETTING POLICYMAKERS TO THINK MOUTH THINK HEALTH



World Oral
Health Day
20 March

www.worldoralhealthday.org



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Introduction

The global burden of oral disease is a paradox. Oral conditions, such as tooth decay (dental caries), gum disease and oral cancer, are among the most common and widespread diseases of humankind.¹ They are generally related to the same risk factors associated with over 100 noncommunicable diseases (NCDs).² Yet, the response to the burden of oral disease, which affects 3.9 billion people worldwide², has been slow. Oral diseases are largely preventable and avoidable – in most cases there is nothing inevitable about them.

Achieving optimal oral health thus constitutes a major public health challenge that requires strong advocates, who are committed to promoting oral health initiatives emphasizing disease prevention measures and integrating oral health into general health and NCD policies.



As defined by FDI:

‘Oral health is multi-faceted and includes the ability to speak, smile, smell, taste, touch, chew, swallow and convey a range of emotions through facial expressions with confidence and without pain, discomfort and disease of the craniofacial complex’.³

This advocacy guide is designed for FDI member national dental associations (NDAs) and individuals/ organizations seeking to leverage World Oral Health Day (WOHD) to advance oral health policy and elevate the issue of oral health to improve awareness and prevention. FDI works globally to advance action on oral health, local action is also needed. Your local advocacy efforts can help create change across the country and even beyond borders, and turn global commitments into actions that benefit your own community.

This guide aims to equip advocates with the information and tools to:

- ➔ leverage the momentum around WOHD for national, regional and global advocacy efforts;
- ➔ understand the status of oral health on the global health and development agenda and why it is critical to unite with the NCD community;
- ➔ push for the integration of oral health into policies addressing NCDs and general health more broadly to secure health and well-being throughout life; and
- ➔ take effective action, with an advocacy checklist, key messages and resources.

If you have any feedback on this guide, e-mail advocacy@fdiworlddental.org

Background to World Oral Health Day



World Oral
Health Day
20 March

What is WOHD?

Celebrated each year on 20 March, WOHD is the largest global awareness campaign on oral health. It was launched by FDI in 2007 and is the culmination of year-long activities dedicated to raising global awareness on the prevention and control of oral diseases. Each year, WOHD focuses on a specific theme and reaches out to the general public, oral health professionals and policymakers, who all have a role to play in helping reduce the disease burden.

Why is WOHD important?

Simply put, oral diseases are major burdens and public health challenges for almost all countries globally that urgently need to be prioritized and addressed. Oral diseases affect 3.9 billion people worldwide², with untreated tooth decay alone impacting almost half of the world's population (44%)⁴.

The burden of oral disease is further compounded by its associated comorbidities with other NCDs, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, and gastrointestinal and pancreatic cancers. Driven

by common risk factors (tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol and unhealthy diets) and the same social determinants, oral diseases and most NCDs can benefit from a comprehensive and integrated response.

Despite the unacceptably high disease burden, oral health is still not considered a priority issue and has remained low on the global health and development agenda. With the recent adoption of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), recognizing health as a major prerequisite for addressing economic, social and environmental development, we are entering into a new era for global health. Now, more than ever there is an urgent need for global commitments from countries to address and integrate oral health into broader general health and NCD policies.

WOHD is a key date in the calendar that can be leveraged to promote the oral health agenda. It's an opportunity to put the spotlight on the immense burden caused by oral diseases and drive awareness among the general public, media and policymakers as well as call for integrated action. It is also a day to educate people to practice good oral hygiene habits and manage their risk factors, including adopting a healthy diet (one that is low in sugar), avoiding tobacco use and excessive alcohol consumption – all actions that will not only benefit oral health but help maintain general health and well-being.

Say Ahh: Think Mouth, Think Health

For the first time, FDI is launching a three-year campaign strategy under the theme ‘Say Ahh’. Combined with different sub-themes each year, the ‘Say Ahh’ campaign brings to life the notion of the mouth serving as a mirror to the body and reflecting overall health. The 2018 campaign sub-theme ‘Think Mouth, Think Health’ introduces the link between oral health as being an indicator of general health and well-being. The campaign aims to educate people that keeping a healthy mouth is crucial to keeping it functioning correctly and for maintaining overall health and quality of life.



‘Say Ahh: Think Mouth, Think Health’ is an opportunity for advocates from the oral health, NCD and general health community to unite and raise their voices collectively for the integration of oral health into NCD and general health policies. The 2018 campaign is the ideal platform for advocates to press governments to take action on the prevention and control of oral diseases. For that, advocates need to raise awareness among policymakers on what still needs to be done to firmly position oral health on the global health and development agenda, and demonstrate how to bridge the gap between policy and implementation by showcasing advocacy successes with statistics and case studies on an integrated response with NCDs and general health.

The WOHD 2018 ‘Say Ahh: Think Mouth, Think Health’ campaign is outlined in detail in the campaign toolkit available at www.worldoralhealthday.org.





Five key messages

If advocates can voice the same key messages and recommendations to policymakers worldwide, we can amplify our impact and be one step closer to ensuring oral health is integrated into NCD and broader health policies, and prioritized on national and global agendas.

1

Oral health is essential to general health. An ‘oral health in all policies’ approach will result in equitable approaches to promoting better oral health and general health.

CAMPAIGN FOR

- ➔ Collaboration across sectors and policy areas (inside and outside the health and oral health domain) to systematically include both health and oral health in all policies

2

Oral health and NCDs do not exist in isolation from one another. Given the shared risk factors with other NCDs, oral health should be integrated into policies addressing them.

CAMPAIGN FOR

- ➔ Policies that reduce sugars intake, harmful use of alcohol and exposure to tobacco, including tax increases, nutrition labelling and advertising restrictions
- ➔ Research into effective interventions for oral health and NCDs that address common risk factors in order to inform policy decision-making
- ➔ Implementation of the Common Risk Factor Approach (CRFA) for the prevention and control of oral diseases and NCDs

3

Oral health must be integrated into the 2030 SDG strategies and monitoring frameworks.

CAMPAIGN FOR

- ➔ Political priority of oral health with national NCD action plans and preparations for the upcoming 2018 UN High-level meeting (HLM) on the prevention and control of NCDs

4

Oral health data must be integrated into national NCD surveillance.

CAMPAIGN FOR

- ➔ Systematic inclusion of oral health and disease indicators into NCD surveillance and epidemiological monitoring

5

WOHD is the ideal platform for governments to work with the oral health community to understand their country's oral health challenges and take action.

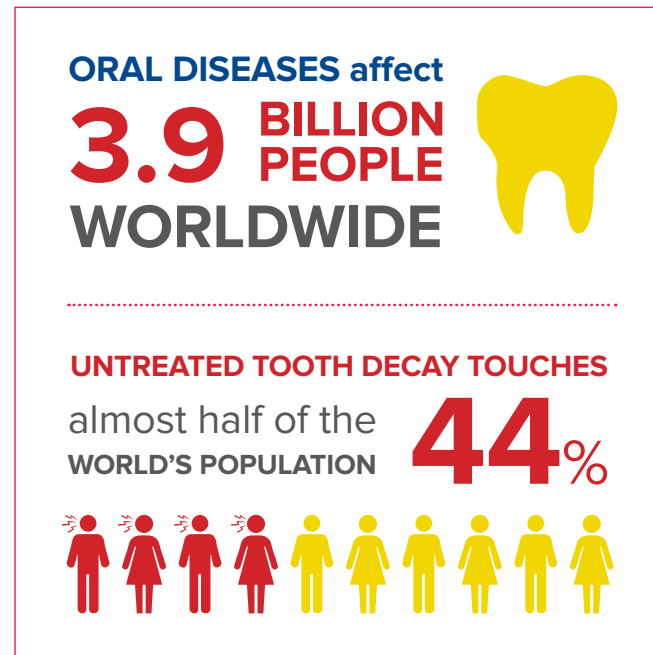
CAMPAIGN FOR

- ➔ Policymakers to work with NDAs to define strategies that address oral health
- ➔ Support from government officials for WOHD events organized by NDAs
- ➔ Oral health policies to be launched on WOHD by policymakers

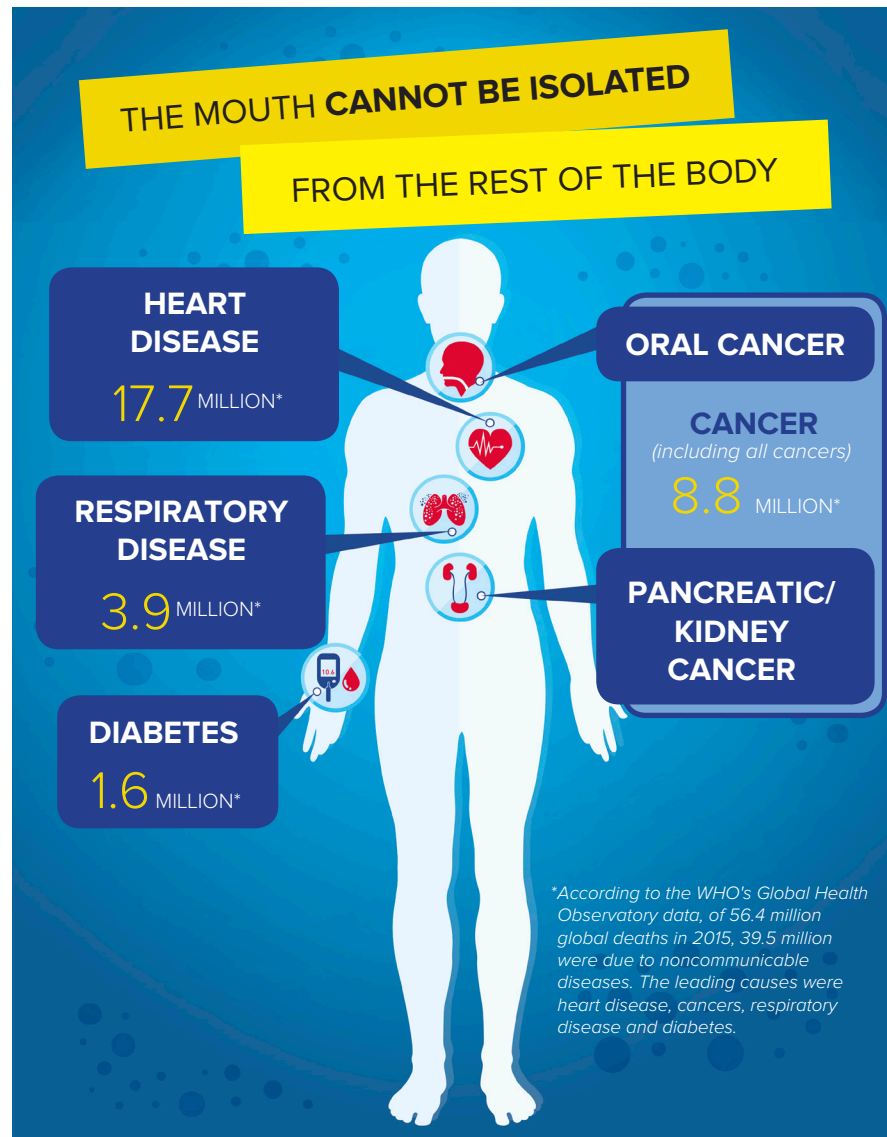
Oral health, NCDs and the global agenda

Key facts

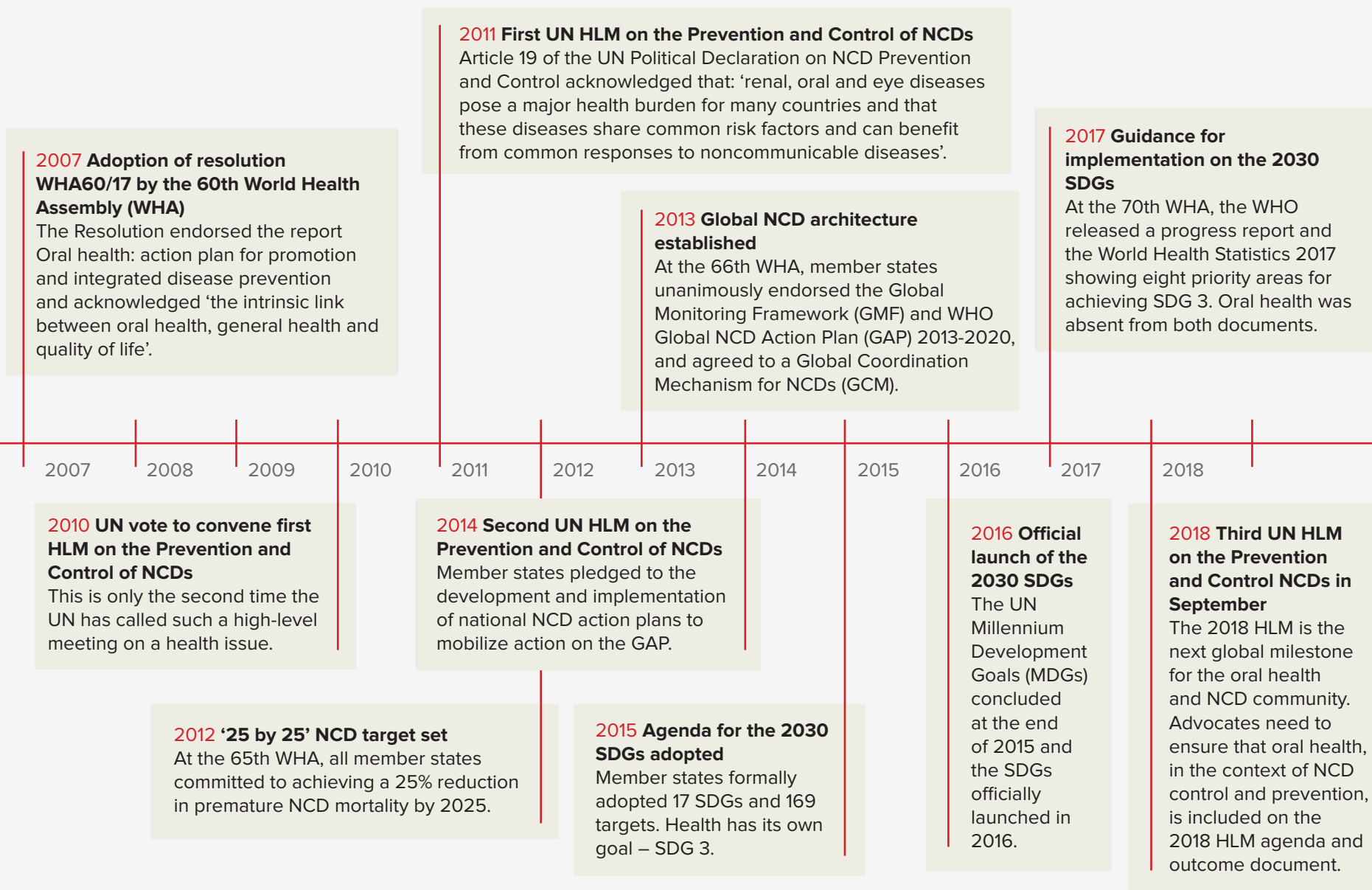
- ➔ **What is oral health?** Oral health is multi-faceted and includes the ability to speak, smile, smell, taste, touch, chew, swallow and convey a range of emotions through facial expressions with confidence and without pain, discomfort and disease of the craniofacial complex.³
- ➔ **Oral health is essential to maintaining general health and well-being.** Oral health affects general health by causing considerable pain and suffering, and by changing what people eat, their speech and their quality of life and well-being.⁵
- ➔ **Oral diseases affect 3.9 billion people worldwide², with untreated tooth decay impacting almost half of the world's population 44%⁴.**



- ➔ **Oral diseases are associated with a number of other NCDs**, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, and gastrointestinal and pancreatic cancers.²
- ➔ **All major NCDs – including most oral diseases – share the same social determinants**, including poverty and some common risk factors.
- ➔ **Risk factors for oral diseases** include an unhealthy diet – particularly one rich in sugars – tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol and poor oral hygiene.
- ➔ **A more integrated approach to healthcare can achieve better outcomes** for patients with oral diseases and other conditions, including NCDs.



Timeline of key milestones



Oral health and the SDGs

The global momentum for NCDs is an opportunity to improve oral health on a global scale.

In 2015 world leaders came together to adopt the SDGs, which was a historic moment for the NCD community. For the first time, NCDs were included as a priority for global sustainable development.

Oral health should be fully integrated into SDG strategies and monitoring frameworks.

There is one health goal (SDG 3) among the 17 SDGs. SDG 3 aspires to ‘ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages’. To measure progress against SDG 3, there are nine health-related targets – including three that focus on NCDs.

The significant health and economic burden of oral disease makes action on oral health a prerequisite for achieving NCD targets and the SDGs.



Oral health goes beyond Goal 3. Almost every proposed SDG has a link with health. Oral health is related to several other SDGs and should be integrated into plans and associated targets.

There is an urgent need to mobilize stakeholders across all sectors for an integrated response to the SDGs. Oral disease risk factors (tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol and unhealthy diets) and their socio-economic determinants are influenced by a diverse range of sectors including agribusiness, energy, trade and education. Adopting a holistic strategy that addresses the impact of each of these sectors alongside a sustainable economic, social and environmental policy approach is essential to promoting oral health and general health.

ORAL HEALTH ACROSS THE SDGs A CALL FOR AN INTEGRATED APPROACH



Tools to help you take action

Your advocacy checklist

To support your advocacy efforts in the lead up to and during WOHD 2018, below is a practical checklist of suggested actions and initiatives to be taken:

- ☑ Perform a stakeholder analysis in your city, state, country or region so you can identify key decision makers and influencers (e.g. individuals or groups) for oral health and policy change
- ☑ Consolidate your local and regional advocacy efforts by joining or creating national NCD coalitions
- ☑ Establish partnerships at local, national or regional levels with like-minded organizations focused on NCDs
- ☑ Reach out to your parliamentarians and encourage them to prioritize oral health
- ☑ Write a letter to your Ministry of Health to discuss priorities and how to better promote oral health
- ☑ Contact FDI at advocacy@fdiworlddental.org to share case studies and updates on your advocacy efforts to promote optimal oral health
- ☑ Be informed and sign up to FDI News for regular updates by visiting www.fdiworlddental.org/newsletter-sign-up

Potential target audiences

- **The Minister of Health**
including key advisors and NCD focal points within the Ministry of Health
- **Parliamentarians**
- **Civil society leaders**
- **Oral health professionals**
- **Healthcare professionals**
- **Business leaders**
- **Donors**
- **Opinion leaders**
- **Media**

Further materials and reading

To provide you with more context for your advocacy work, below is a short list of reading material with further information on the WOHD 2018 campaign, oral health, NCDs and SDGs.

- ➔ **The Challenge of Oral Disease – A call for global action. The Oral Health Atlas. 2nd ed.**
Geneva. FDI World Dental Federation, 2015. www.fdiworlddental.org/resources/oral-health-atlas/oral-health-atlas-2015
- ➔ **FDI's definition of oral health**
FDI World Dental Federation, 2017. www.fdiworlddental.org/oral-health/fdis-definition-of-oral-health
- ➔ **FDI Vision 2020: Shaping the future of oral health**
FDI World Dental Federation, 2012. www.fdiworlddental.org/resources/brochures/fdi-vision-2020
- ➔ **NCD Alliance website** www.ncdalliance.org
- ➔ **No Health Without Oral Health webcast**
FDI World Dental Federation and the NCD Alliance, 2017. www.worldoralhealthday.org/webcasts/FDI4/index.htm
- ➔ **Policy Brief on Accelerating Action on Oral Health and NCDs**
FDI World Dental Federation and NCD Alliance, 2017 www.fdiworlddental.org/resources/brochures/accelerating-action-on-oral-health-and-ncds
- ➔ **Sugars and Dental Caries Guide: A practical guide**
FDI World Dental Federation, 2017. www.fdiworlddental.org/resources/toolkits/sugars-and-dental-caries
- ➔ **2030 Sustainable Development Goals** www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals
- ➔ **White Paper on Oral Health Worldwide**
FDI World Dental Federation, 2015. www.fdiworlddental.org/resources/white-papers/oral-health-worldwide
- ➔ **WOHD campaign materials** www.worldoralhealthday.org/resources

References

- 1 **White Paper on Oral Health Worldwide.** FDI World Dental Federation 2015 (<http://www.fdiworlddental.org/resources/white-papers/oral-health-worldwide>), accessed 14 November 2017.
- 2 **The Challenge of Oral Disease – A call for global action.** The Oral Health Atlas. 2nd ed. Geneva. FDI World Dental Federation, 2015 ([http://www.fdiworlddental.org/publications/oral-health-atlas/oral-health-atlas-\(2015\)](http://www.fdiworlddental.org/publications/oral-health-atlas/oral-health-atlas-(2015))), accessed 14 November 2017).
- 3 **FDI's oral health definition** (<http://www.fdiworlddental.org/oral-health/fdis-definition-of-oral-health>), accessed 14 November 2017.
- 4 **Global Burden of Disease Study.** The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, 2012 (<http://www.healthdata.org/gbd>), accessed 14 November 2017).
- 5 **Oral health, general health and quality of life.** World Health Organization, 2005 (<http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/83/9/editorial30905html/en/>), accessed 14 November 2017).

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**World Oral
Health Day**

20 March

Join a global movement

Activities such as public talks, screenings, walks and runs, concerts and much more are organized by FDI member dental associations and partners across the world.

Get
involved

-  /FDIWorldDentalFederation
-  /worlddentalfed
-  /worlddentalfed
-  /worldoralhealthday
-  /company/FDIWorldDentalFederation

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